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*More than two million households in the US will have blank television screens today when stations across the country switch off their analogue signal. The nationwide digital transition has caused a last minute rush to buy converter boxes and new TVs. Greg Wood reports:*

American television viewers have been **bombarded** with a series of **adverts** over recent weeks, warning them that the **analogue signal** would be switched off today and **urging** them to buy **set-top converter boxes** if they didn't want to lose **reception**.

The government has issued **coupons**, worth 40 dollars each, to cover most of the cost. In total the US authorities have spent two billion dollars to **smooth the transition**. But, according to the Federal Communications Commission, there are still 2.2 million households which have made no preparations.

Unlike the United Kingdom, where the analogue signal is being switched off **region by region**, the United States has decided to **pull the plug** in one go, across the nation, leading to accusations that some groups, especially the elderly and the low income households, have been left behind in the **digital rush**.

Greg Wood, BBC News, New York

## Vocabulary and definitions

<b>bombarded</b>	had lots of information directed at them
<b>adverts</b>	commonly used abbreviation for 'advertisements': films, pictures or songs aimed at selling a product or idea to viewers
<b>analogue signal</b>	the system of broadcasting by which televisions currently receive programmes
<b>urging</b>	strongly encouraging
<b>set-top converter boxes</b>	digital receivers which sit on top of televisions and contain the technology to convert TV pictures and sound into a digital format
<b>reception</b>	the television's ability to receive programmes
<b>coupons</b>	official pieces of paper which can be used instead of money
<b>region by region</b>	one area or location at a time
<b>pull the plug</b>	to stop an activity continuing in the way it has done
<b>digital rush</b>	the changeover to digital technology which is happening very quickly

More on this story: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/8096438.stm>

Read and listen to the story and the vocabulary online:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/language/wordsinthenews/2009/06/090612\\_witn\\_digital\\_page.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/language/wordsinthenews/2009/06/090612_witn_digital_page.shtml)